

Introduction

The story of Paul in the New Testament is truly an amazing one. It is amazing because of who it tells of: is the story of God and His amazing grace.

Paul was born in the city of Tarsus approximately 4-5 AD. His father was a Pharisee of the tribe of Benjamin (Acts 23:6, Phil 3:5). Paul was born to Jewish parents that had Roman citizenship (Acts 16:37-38, Acts 22:22-29). He was raised in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3).

Paul studied the Hebrew scriptures under Rabbi Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). He was also well versed in Greek traditions and philosophies and could speak Greek as well. Which is surprising in a way considering how he was raised in strict adherence to the Law of Moses. Anything Greek would have been not welcomed in the household he grew up in.

Paul was a prideful man. Paul took pride in his family stature, his race, his education, and his zeal for God. He worked hard at trying to attain righteousness through the way he was taught – to obey every law to the letter. His education and zeal for God taught him nothing about the one true and living God. What this pride did do is develop into a hatred for anyone he thought did not believe the same.

This is how Paul describes himself:

Philippians 3:5-6 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

1. He states that he was "circumcised on the eighth day."
2. He calls himself "of the people of Israel."
3. He says he is "of the tribe of Benjamin."
4. He tells his readers that he is "a Hebrew of Hebrews."
5. When he thinks of his life relative to the law, he calls himself "a Pharisee."
6. When he speaks of his zeal, he talks of "persecuting the church."
7. Lastly, he says that with respect to the law, he was "faultless"—and note that he doesn't describe himself as "sinless." (from Zondervan Academic)

LIFE OF PAUL

What's in a name?

We are introduced to Paul as Saul in Acts chapter 7. There is a belief out there that after Saul's conversion God gives him the name of Paul in a similar fashion as when He changed Peter's name (Matthew 16:16-18). This is not the case. The custom in this period of time would see that Saul had 2 possibly even 3 names. The following verse shows us that Saul was also known as Paul. This is his Roman name. No new name given to him by the Lord.

He is referred to as Saul in Acts up until Acts 13:9:

Acts 13:9 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁹ Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

After this event in Cyprus he is only referred to as Paul.

One Man, Two Lives

Before Paul ever spoke these words, he lived them first.

2 Corinthians 5:17 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

In order to understand how amazing God's grace is and the calling God put on Paul's life, we first must understand who he was before Jesus. As mentioned previously we are introduced to Paul as Saul in Chapter 7. The introduction is not one that you would expect for someone who, arguably outside of Jesus Himself, had such a large impact on Christianity.

He was there at the stoning of Stephen. Not only there but presiding over it. In Acts 22:20 we read

²⁰ And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting ^[b]to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'

Saul was not the coat collector: he presided over this event. He approved of it. In Acts chapter 8:1-3 we read

¹ Now Saul was consenting to his death.

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At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

³ As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

Then we read in Acts chapter 9:1-2

¹Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Paul felt righteous in his pursuit of those who were of The Way. He truly believed what he was doing was honoring God and he did it with a passion and with a vengeance. Paul felt he must have completed his goal in Jerusalem because He then asked for letters to go to foreign cities and pull people out of synagogues. He knew that he could not pull them off the streets or out of their houses in these foreign cities. But he did know he had the power to enter the synagogues and continue his reign of terror if he received these letters.

It is difficult to read because of all we know about Paul: the amazing impact he had and how God used him. But we need to remember that his negative impact before Jesus was powerful. He despised Christians. He hunted them down and his goal was to wipe them out. Read Acts 22:4-5, Acts 26:9-11, Galatians 1:13-14. That zealotry he speaks of caused Paul to do many violent things to Christians.

BUT GOD....

Up until now we have seen that Peter was growing as a leader among the twelve. Peter was preaching with power and doing miraculous things. The Holy Spirit was moving in him in a powerful way. Acts chapter 9 is a turning point where we see what God's vision for Paul is.

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Acts 9:15 ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children^[c] of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

With that backdrop in mind it brings us to the rest of Acts chapter 9 and the amazing Damascus Road conversion of, at the time, the most notorious persecutor of Christians.

At the start of chapter 9 you can feel Paul's hatred for Christians. This hatred was driving him for some 100 miles from his home to continue his persecution of Christians. Paul had a plan. But so did God.

Paul's plan ended before it could even get started. God's plan was about to unfold. He was about to meet the One he was actually persecuting. This divine appointment will dramatically change his life forever.

There on that road to Damascus Paul met Jesus, literally. It was a divine appointment scheduled by God. God's plan – REDEMPTION.

Saul learned that Jesus was not dead, but alive. He learned that everything he had heard, Jesus died, He was buried, He rose again, was true. And he learned that from Jesus himself.

His entire life is going to change here. Like ours, for the better, even though he did not know that.

Jesus taught him another thing that day. His persecution of the people was a persecution of Jesus. Everything he did to His people he did to Jesus. While Paul may have thought himself a very educated person, his education had only just begun. Jesus showed Paul that the Gospel message, His work on earth was for everybody. Even the notorious Paul.

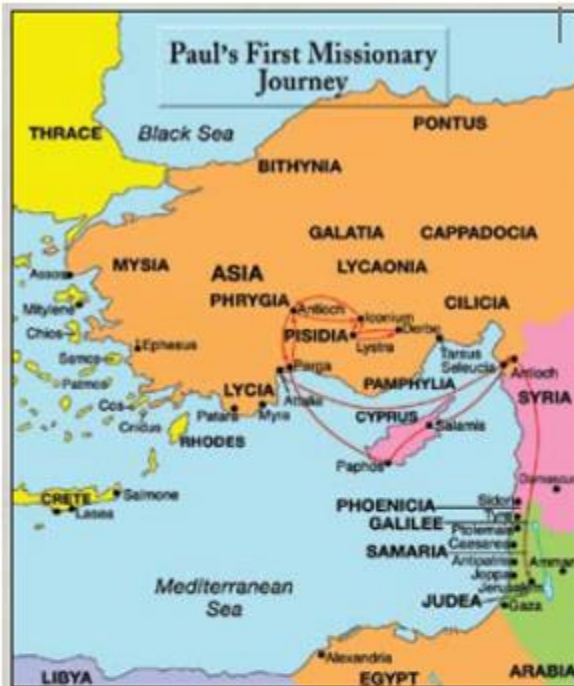
LIFE OF PAUL

This is where Paul's testimony really begins. After his conversion here in Acts the Lord uses Paul in a mighty way. Paul's story is our story. We are REDEEMED. Allow God to use you in mighty ways.

LIFE OF PAUL

Paul's Missionary Journeys

Paul's First Missionary Journey



Paul's First Missionary Journey AD 47-49 Acts 13:1-14:28

Travelers: Paul, Barnabas, John Mark
Main route: Cyprus and Turkey
Cities/places: (1400 miles)

1. **Antioch in Syria:** The Holy Spirit sets apart Paul and Barnabas for the missionary ministry. John Mark goes along as their helper.
2. **Sailed from Seleucia to Salamis and Paphos (on Cyprus):** Paul confronts a sorcerer named Elymas and blinds him. (From this point the Bible calls him Paul, rather than Saul.)
3. **Perga in Pamphylia:** John Mark deserts the group and returns to Jerusalem.

4. **Antioch of Pisidia (Turkey today):** Paul preaches his longest recorded sermon, and many respond. Jewish leaders drive them out of the city. The Lord calls Paul to focus his ministry on Gentiles. The Gentiles are glad and many become believers.



Early Cave Church in Antioch

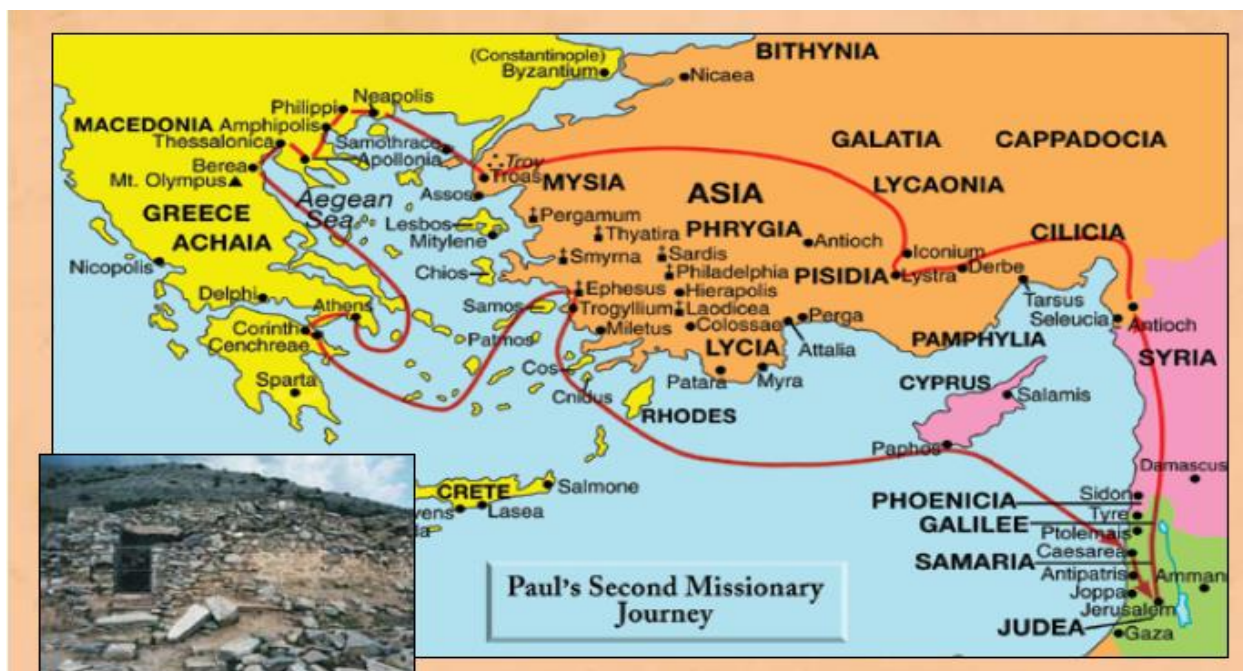
5. **Iconium:** More plots force them to flee.
6. **Lystra:** When Paul heals a lame man, the townspeople think he and Barnabas are Greek gods. Jews from Antioch stir up the crowd, and Paul is stoned and left for dead.
7. **Derbe:** Paul preaches and many disciples are added to the church.
8. **Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia, Pamphylia, Perga, Attalia:** On the return trip, Paul and Barnabas appoint elders in the churches they had planted.
9. **Antioch (Syria):** Paul remains there for a while, reporting what God had done. Paul writes Galatians.
10. **Jerusalem, via Phoenicia and Samaria:** In AD 49, Paul and Barnabas report to the leaders of the Jerusalem church. This meeting is known as the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35).

LIFE OF PAUL

Year	The Life of Paul	Books Written	Historical Events
	Barnabas and Saul "separated" and sent out (Acts 13:2, 3)		
	They travel from Antioch to Seleucia, then to Cyprus (Acts 13:4)		
	While on Cyprus they go to Salamis and Paphos (Acts 13:5-12)		
	From Paphos they go to Perga of Pamphylia where John Mark departs for home (Acts 13:13)		
	Ministry in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:14-50)		
	At Iconium (Acts 13:51 - 14:6)		
	Flees to Lystra and Derbe, preaching the gospel (Acts 14:6-7)		
	In Lystra Paul and Barnabas are mistaken for gods (Acts 14:8-18)		
	Stoned at Lystra, supposed to be dead, but re-enters the city (Acts 14:19-20)		
	Departs with Barnabas to Derbe, preaching the gospel (Acts 14:20-21)		
	They return to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to strengthen disciples and appoint elders (Acts 14:21-24)		
	From Pisidia they returned to Antioch of Syria and reported their journey to the church (Acts 14:24-28)		
49	Goes up to the Jerusalem Council with Barnabas (Acts 15:1-29; Galatians 2:1)		Claudius expels Jews from Rome and blames it on Chrestus (a possible reference to Christ)
	Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch of Syria, teaching and preaching (Acts 15:30-35; Galatians 2:11-14)		
	Contention over John Mark; Barnabas and John Mark sail to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-39)		

LIFE OF PAUL

Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Paul's Second Missionary Journey AD 49-51

Acts 15:36-18:22

Travelers: Paul, Silas, Timothy, Priscilla and Aquilla, Luke

Main route: Syria, Turkey, Greece, Jerusalem

Cities/places: (2800 miles)

1. Antioch in Syria: Paul and Barnabas decide to visit the churches again, but disagree about who should go with them. Paul doesn't want to take John Mark because he left them on their first trip. Barnabas takes John Mark with him to Cyprus; Paul takes Silas.

2. Syria and Cilicia: Paul and Silas take a letter from the Jerusalem church for the churches in this region.



Diana (Artemis), the goddess of Ephesus

3. Derbe, Lystra, Iconium: While visiting these churches, Timothy joins them.

4. Troas: While in this seaport, Paul has a vision of a man from Macedonia calling him to come help them. Acts 16:10 uses the word "we," indicating that Luke was with Paul.



The Lion of Amphipolis, built 200 years before Paul's visit

6. Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica: Jews in Thessalonica try to have Paul and Silas arrested after they gain some converts.

7. Berea: The people in the synagogue receive the message eagerly. Silas and Timothy stay here while Paul goes on.

8. Athens (Mars Hill, or Areopagus): Paul sees an altar to an unknown god, and preaches to the thinkers of Athens. A number of them believe.

9. Corinth: Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla, who join him. People try to get Paul arrested, but the authorities refuse. He writes 1 and 2 Thessalonians here.

10. Cenchrea: He gets his hair cut because he had taken a vow (Acts 18:18). No more details are given.

11. Ephesus: Paul leaves Priscilla and Aquila here.

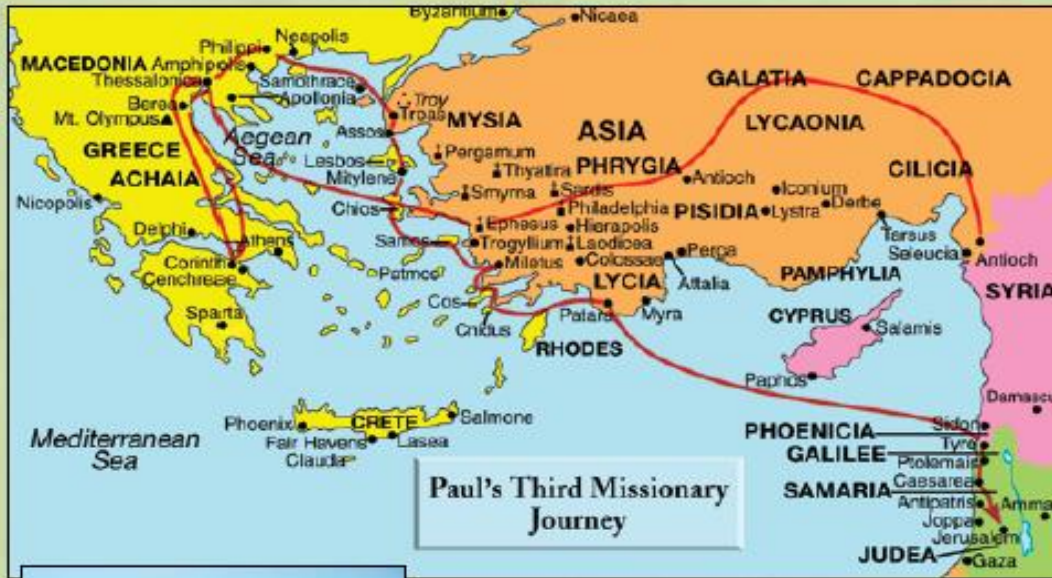
12. Caesarea in Syria, Jerusalem, Antioch in Syria: After visiting these churches, Paul returns to his home base of Antioch.

LIFE OF PAUL

Year	The Life of Paul	Books Written	Historical Events
	Paul and Silas depart, going through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches (Acts 15:40-41)	Galatians (?)	
50	Goes to Derbe and Lystra and picks up Timothy, strengthening the churches (Acts 16:1-5)		The rise of the Zealots
	They go to Troas and Paul sees a vision of a Macedonian man (Acts 16:6-10)		
51	They sail from Troas to Neapolis (Acts 16:11)		
	To Philippi where Paul meets Lydia (Acts 16:12-15)		
	Paul and Silas imprisoned after casting out a demon from a slave girl (Acts 16:16-25)		
	Prison doors opened miraculously and the jailer saved (Acts 16:25-34)		
	Departs from Philippi (Acts 16:35-40)		
	They passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia (Acts 17:1)		
	At Thessalonica and preached Christ, but had to flee (Acts 17:1-10)		
	At Berea where he leaves Silas and Timothy (Acts 17:10-14)		
	At Corinth and rejoined with Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:1-17)	Galatians (?)	
		1 Thessalonians	
52		2 Thessalonians	
53	Paul returns to Antioch after stopping at Ephesus, Caesarea, and Jerusalem (Acts 18:18-22)		

LIFE OF PAUL

Paul's Third Missionary Journey



Corinth. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians while he was in Ephesus.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey AD 52-57 Acts 18:23-21:16

Travelers: Paul, Timothy, Luke, others

Main route: Turkey, Greece, Lebanon, Israel

Cities/places: (2700 miles)

1. **Region of Galatia and Phrygia:** Paul decides to visit the churches again.
2. **Ephesus:** Paul stays here two years. He writes 1 Corinthians. So many people convert that the silversmiths who manufacture idols start a riot.
3. **Macedonia and Greece (Achaia):** Paul writes 2 Corinthians and Romans.

4. **Philippi (Macedonia) and Troas:** While Paul is preaching, a young man falls asleep, falls from a third-story window, and dies. Paul revives him.

5. **Assos, Mitylene (near Chios), Samos, Miletus:** Elders from Ephesus meet the ship at Miletus; Paul tells them he expects to be imprisoned in Jerusalem.

6. **Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre:** Disciples warn Paul not to go to Jerusalem.

7. **Ptolemais and Caesarea:** A prophet predicts that Paul will be imprisoned and handed over to the Gentiles.

8. **Jerusalem:** The missionaries report to the church leaders, who urge Paul to participate in a purification ritual at the temple to counteract rumors that Christianity is anti-Jewish.



Columns in the open air market where Paul preached in Ephesus

LIFE OF PAUL

Year	The Life of Paul	Books Written	Historical Events
	Travels through Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples (Acts 18:23) Passes through the upper regions on his way to Ephesus (Acts 19:1) Ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-41)		
54		1 Corinthians	Claudius poisoned by his wife Nero becomes Emperor
55			
56	Goes to Macedonia (Acts 20:1) Travels to Greece (Acts 20:2) Goes back to Macedonia (Acts 20:3) At Troas (Acts 20:4-12) Assos. Mitylene. Chios. Samos. Togyllium. (Acts 20:13-15) Paul exhorts the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts 20:15-38) Cos. Rhodes. Patara. Phoenicia. (Acts 21:1, 2) At Tyre (Acts 21:3-6) At Ptolemais (Acts 21:7) At Caesarea (Acts 21:8-14)	2 Corinthians Romans	
57	At Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-25) Paul gets arrested in the temple and causes a mob (Acts 21:26-36) Addresses the mob (Acts 21:37 - 22:21) Paul's citizenship saves him from scourging (Acts 22:22-29) Before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30 - 23:10) Jesus tells Paul that he will bear witness of him in Rome (Acts 23:11) The plot against Paul's life (Acts 23:12-22) Sent safely to Felix the governor (Acts 23:23-35) Paul before Felix (Acts 24:1-27)		
59	Paul before Festus (Acts 25:1-12)		

LIFE OF PAUL

Paul's Journey to Rome

Paul's Journey to Rome AD 57-62, Acts 21:17-28:31

Travelers: Paul, Roman guards, Luke, others

Main route: Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, Crete, Malta, Sicily, Italy

Cities/places: (2250 miles)

1. Jerusalem (Acts 21:27-22:30): The Roman commander arrests Paul to save him from a Jewish mob. When the commander learns of a death threat against Paul, he orders an armed escort to take him to Caesarea.

2. Antipatris and Caesarea (Acts 23:23-26:32): Paul is tried before Felix, the governor of Judea. Felix leaves Paul in prison for two years, and



The Colosseum in Rome was built four years after Paul's death

he is tried again before Festus, who was appointed governor after Felix. The Jews try to get Paul transferred to Jerusalem where they plan to have

him killed. Paul demands his right as a Roman citizen and appeals his case to Caesar. King Agrippa visits Festus, and Paul appears before him as well.

3. Sidon: The centurion in charge of Paul lets him visit with friends here. Then Paul boarded a ship, and set sail for Italy.

4. Myra, Cnidus, Fair Havens (Crete): Paul recommends that the ship stay in safe harbor, but the centurion orders the ship to sail on.

5. Clauda and the Island of Malta (shipwrecked): After a two-week storm, the ship is wrecked near the island of Malta. Everyone on the ship makes it to shore after the shipwreck. While putting wood on a campfire, Paul is bitten by a venomous snake, but it does not harm him.

6. Syracuse (Sicily), Rhegium, Puteoli: Paul stays with believers for seven days.

7. Appii Forum, Three Taverns: Paul is met by Christians from Rome.

8. Rome: Paul remains under house arrest for two years, where he writes Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians.



LIFE OF PAUL

Year	The Life of Paul		Books Written	Historical Events
	Paul's appeal honored - turning point towards Rome (Acts 25:12) Paul before Agrippa (Acts 25:13 - 26:32) Paul departs for Rome and sails to Myra (Acts 27:1-27:6-8) They sail to Fair Havens on Crete (Acts 27:6-8) In spite of Paul's warning, they set sail again (Acts 27:9-12) In the midst of a terrible storm they get shipwrecked on the island of Malta (Acts 27:13 - 28:1) At Malta (Acts 28:2-10) Sails to Syracuse (Acts 28:11, 12) Sails to Rhegium then Puteoli (Acts 28:13)	Journey to Rome		Nero (AD 54-68) Assassination of Agrippina, the mother of
60	Arrives in Rome (Acts 28:14-16) Meets with the Jews (Acts 28:17-28) Preaches the gospel without hindrance for two whole years in his rented house (Acts 28:30-31).	First Roman Imprisonment	Philemon	
61			Colossians Ephesians	
62			Philippians	
	Released from Roman imprisonment		1 Timothy (c. 62-64) Titus (c. 62-64)	
63	Further missionary work			
64				The Great Fire in Rome; Major persecution of Christianity begins
				Josephus pleads the interests of the Jews before Rome
			2 Timothy (c. 64-66)	Nero constructs the Domus Aurea
66	Second imprisonment and martyrdom under Nero	Second Roman Imprisonment		The beginning of the Jewish Revolt against Rome
67				Josephus surrenders to the Romans
68				Nero commits suicide
69				Vespian prevails as the Emperor amidst civil war
70				Destruction of the temple under Titus

LIFE OF PAUL

Letters Written by Paul and their Message

Letter	To	Where Written	When Written	Theme
Key Verse				
Galatians 5:22, 23	Church at Galatia	Antioch in Syria	AD 49	Free in Christ Through Faith
1 Thessalonians 5:16-23	Church at Thessalonica	Corinth	AD 51	Letter to New Christians
2 Thessalonians 3:4-6	Church at Thessalonica	Corinth	AD 51	Persevere Until Christ Returns
1 Corinthians 13:4, 5	Church at Corinth	Ephesus	AD 56	Addresses Problems in the Church
2 Corinthians 12:9	Church at Corinth	Macedonia	AD 56	Paul's Authority Against False Teachers
Romans 12:1, 2a	Church at Rome	Corinth	AD 57	Salvation: Righteousness from God
Ephesians 2:8, 9	Church at Ephesus	Rome	AD 60/61	The Church and Body of Christ
Colossians 2:9, 10	Church at Colossae	Rome	AD 60/61	Christ Is Everything
Philemon 17-19	Philemon, a friend at Colossae	Rome	AD 60/61	Brothers in Christ
Philippians 2:14, 15	Church at Philippi	Rome	AD 62	Joy at All Times
1 Timothy 4:12, 13	Timothy, leader of Church at Ephesus	Macedonia	AD 62/63	Caring for the Church
Titus 3:4-7	Titus, leader of Church in Crete	Corinth	AD 63	Living in Faith
2 Timothy 3:15-17	Timothy, leader of Church at Ephesus	Rome	AD 67	Paul's Last Words

LIFE OF PAUL

Key Teachings

Sin: The universal human condition; no one can claim perfection (Romans 3:9-23).

Law: It shows us our sin, but can't save us (Romans 3:20, 27, 28; Galatians 3:1-14, 21, 22).

Righteousness: We can't make ourselves good enough to be accepted by God; we must be given His righteousness (Romans 3:21-26; 8:3, 4; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 5:5, 6).

Mercy: God doesn't give us the punishment we deserve (Romans 9:18).

Grace: God freely gives us the divine favor we don't deserve (Ephesians 2:1-10).

Covenant: God has made a new agreement with us, declaring that we are His people. The old covenant was written on tablets of stone; the new one is written by the Spirit on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, 34; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6-18).

Justification: God declares us righteous in His sight. We are justified by grace through faith (Romans 3:28-30; 5:1, 2).

Sanctification: The Holy Spirit works within us to make us more like Christ (Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 3:13).

Trinity: Paul refers to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though the word Trinity isn't in the Bible, Paul's words helped confirm this Christian doctrine (2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Romans 8:9-11).

Holy Spirit: We are to live by the power of God's Spirit (Romans 8:1-17; Galatians 5:16-26; 2 Corinthians 5:5).

Messiah: Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies (Galatians 4:4, 5).

Lordship of Christ: Jesus is Lord of all (Romans 10:9-17; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Philippians 2:9-11; Colossians 1:15-20).

"In Christ": Paul's description of our relationship to Jesus. He uses it over 80 times.

Crucifixion: We are saved by Jesus' death on the cross, because He is the only perfect One who could die in our place to take the punishment for our sins (Romans 5:8, 15; 1 Corinthians 1:22-25; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 19; Colossians 1:21, 22).

Love: Love is more important than other traits (1 Corinthians 13).

Resurrection: Jesus was raised from the dead and exalted by God. Because He rose and went to the Father, we shall rise also (1 Corinthians 15).

Return of Christ: This future event gives us hope to face today (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Romans 8:18-21).

Gentiles (non-Jews): No longer excluded from the people of God (Ephesians 2:11-22; Romans 3:29).

Jews: Not abandoned by God, in spite of their unbelief (Romans 11:25-32).

Spiritual gifts: The Holy Spirit has given us gifts to use in Christ's service (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12; Ephesians 4:11-13).

Church: God has created a unique community of people who worship Him, love each other, and witness to the world (Ephesians 2:11-22; 4:1-6; Galatians 3:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 3:15).

Church leaders: God has equipped them to help us in our spiritual development. Paul spells out the requirements leaders must meet (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9; Ephesians 4:11-13).

Marriage and singleness: Paul says singles can focus on serving God; marriage is a calling. The main point is that whether we are married or single, we are to be committed to Christ (1 Cor. 7).

Family life: Our families are to reflect our loving relationship to God (Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Colossians 3:18-21).

Masters and slaves: They are equal before God (Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-4:1).

Husbands and wives: Christian marriages should exhibit submission and love (Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18, 19).

Parents and children: Parents are to treat their children with gentleness and respect; children are to honor and obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20, 21).

Prayer: Paul teaches about prayer and describes his own prayers (Ephesians 1:15-19; 3:14-21; 6:19, 20; Philippians 1:3-6; 4:6; Colossians 1:3-14; 4:2-4; 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3; 5:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 1:3; Philemon 4).

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

—Ephesians 2:8, 9